

**Decolonial Pedagogy of Dissent: The Life of the Occidental  
Nation-State among Bosnian-Herzegovinian and Chilean Secondary  
Students**

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**Abstract**

*This article builds upon strings of thought that advance comparative thinking between postcolonial and post-socialist spaces [1], and includes communication stories of subaltern high school struggles from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Chile. I ask what does the experience of protesting students tell us about the ways in which Bosnia and Chile remain entangled within the occidental nation-state project by bringing dissenting student narratives and their challenge to the hegemonic orders, as they developed in Srednja Strukovna Škola Jajce (Bosnia-Herzegovina) and Liceo de Aplicación (Chile), to the center of discussion. I understand the educational project as central for the enforcement of power/knowledge relationships that weave permissible forms of nation-state being and subjectivity, and posit student protests as a practice of decoloniality projected upon the coloniality of the modern nation-state and demonstrate how student narrative rearticulates the sum of knowledge we have of these social formations. The study is methodologically based on several ethnographic visits to Bosnia and Chile and the high schools in question, and on personal communication I have maintained with protesting students. The article contributes to the literature on decolonial theory by demonstrating the conflictual relationship that the colonial nation-state project maintains with societies on global peripheries that fail to meet its prescribed ideal.*

It was a cloudy and rainy day in January 2017, one of many that characterize the long and sunless winters of central Bosnia, when I entered the cozy coffee shop in the center of town to meet Luka. I arrived in Jajce a few days ago to meet a particular group of young people who initiated the first protest against school segregation in post-socialist Bosnia-Herzegovina. Due to the personal history I have as a former student of a divided high school in the city of Mostar, the student opposition towards the ‘two schools under one roof’ – a

type of educational project that segregates students on the basis of ethnicity<sup>1</sup> – immediately drew my attention and awakened feelings that go way beyond mere academic interest.

While we spoke about his future hopes and life plans, Luka told me: „I would prefer to study here in Bosnia, I mean in Sarajevo. That is, I do not want to go abroad because I wish to do something for *naši ljudi* (b/h/s. ‘our people’).“ Once the phrase *naši ljudi* entered the conversation, Luka suddenly paused and, thinking for a moment about what he just said, clarified this: „When I say *naši*, I do not mean Croats [his and my ethnic group]. When I say *naši* I mean all Bosnians and Herzegovinians, the people of this country.“

Luka’s statement, even if virtually removed from the arena of parliamentary representation and hegemonic understanding of Bosnia-Herzegovina, was important because it successfully reinforced the ambiguous dialectics of ‘us’ and ‘them’ that, even in spite of the terrible results of the 1990s war, keep informing the perplexities of home and belonging in post-socialist Bosnia-Herzegovina. Playing with the concept that, within a contemporary ethno-national context, came to predominantly refer to ones’ ethnic group, Luka repurposed the term in order to express the feeling of belonging which was not captured within the dominant discourse.

My thinking about the events that emerged in Srednja Strukovna Škola Jajce (Jajce Technical High School) during the October of 2019 initiated an exchange with another educational movement, one developing on the other side of the world, in Chile. The two rebellions were similar in a way that both fought against the segregationist model of education which reflected the predominantly sociopolitical organization. In a sense, both models related to the inability of these countries

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<sup>1</sup>There are three predominant ethnic groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim), Serb (Bosnian Orthodox) and Croat (Bosnian Catholic). Young people are forced to attend separate educational programs in the parts of the country where two or more ethnic groups live together. When these young people live so close to each other, they are placed within the same building but kept divided in different classes, floors or even segregated by having different entrances to the same high school.

to forge unified societies. While the main obstacle towards reaching unity in Bosnia was the category of ethnicity/religion, in Chile it was that of class/race.

Domingo, a high school student who would only later become my informant, and a group of pupils from Liceo de Aplicación (Application High School) started mass evacuations in the metropolis of Santiago in a struggle against segregationist educational principles reigning throughout education in their country, an intervention that sparked the biggest wave of social mobilization in post-colonial and post-dictatorial Chile. This student protest, perhaps portraying an intriguing relationship that exists between education and state organization, resulted in the convocation of the plebiscite for the redaction of the new constitution, one that will become the first democratic social contract this society would establish in more than 200 years since its official date of independence.

The student antagonism towards the pedagogical projects that stand at the heart of the ethno-national state in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the racial-neoliberal one in Chile portrays ambiguities that circulate around the aura of these modern nation-states. Consequently, outbursts of dissent in Srednja Strukovna Škola Jajce and Liceo de Aplicación become immensely important because students, rather than proposing a mere educational reform, demanded a complete refoundation of their respective societies. On the one hand, feeling unease while being forced to wear the mad man's shirt imposed upon Bosnia-Herzegovina by the coloniality of a nation-state that was officially consecrated by the constitution signed in a U.S. military base in 1995<sup>2</sup>, Jajce students offered a vision of community relaxed from the voices of nation-state politics in its replacement. On the other hand,

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<sup>2</sup>The Bosnian and Herzegovinian contemporary constitution, also known as Dayton Peace Agreement, was signed by three warring factions under the supervision of the United States in the military base situated in Dayton, Ohio. The document, written only in English, creates an ethno-national social order inside of which people of distinct ethnic origin are not allowed to form part of and feel that they belong to the same political community.

speaking from the position of a public high school attended by pupils of a lower social class that live lives diametrically opposite to those of the wealthy, marginalized actors of *Darío Salas* rejected the segregationist principles of Chilean education and demanded a complete refoundation of the nation-state perplexed with colonial historicity.

The present article with its focus of stories of subaltern student struggle explores the relationship between education and nation-state organization in the post-socialist and postcolonial spaces of Bosnia and Chile. Taking dissenting student narratives and their challenge to the hegemonic orders as the center of discussion, I ask: 1) What does the experience of protesting students tell us about the ways in which Bosnia and Chile remain entangled within the occidental nation-state project? 2) How does the student narrative rearticulate the sum of knowledge we have of these social formations? In this sense, understanding an educational project as central for the enforcement of power/knowledge relationships that weave permissible forms of nation-state being and subjectivity, I posit student protests as a practice of decoloniality projected upon the coloniality of a modern nation-state. The study is methodologically based on several ethnographic visits to Bosnia and Chile, to the high schools in question, and on personal communication I have maintained with the students engaged in the protests. The article contributes to the literature on decolonial theory by demonstrating how colonial pedagogy remains deeply embedded within the nation-state project, and portraying the conflictual relationship this project maintains with societies on global peripheries that fail to meet its prescribed ideal.

### **Coloniality of the modern nation-state in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Chile**

I think about Bosnia-Herzegovina and Chile together by accentuating their entanglements within the historical formation of the modern nation-state as a hegemonic form of sociopolitical organization that expanded globally as a result of colonialism. I follow the modernity/coloniality perspective, in a sense that I recognize how the end of

formal colonialism did not bring about the disappearance of coloniality as a knowledge structuring mechanism. In a notch, being „constitutive of modernity“<sup>3</sup>, coloniality is a product of colonialism in which we all reside. That is, the conceptual unity of modernity-coloniality<sup>4</sup> affirms that the colonial epistemic project informs the „overall design or optics determining relations between the world, the things, and the humans“<sup>5</sup> even in the historical epoch of postcolonialism.

In this sense, the occidental nation-state form – unitarist, homogeneous and racist/xenophobic in nature – presents a remnant of the colonial project that is central for the perpetuation of the coloniality of power in the contemporary world.<sup>6</sup> The nation-state form, geopolitically and geohistorically located in Western Europe, remains overdetermined by its specific ways of knowledge, subjectivity and being.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the nation-state form embodies a „supposedly universal framework of thought“ that „perpetuates, in a real and not merely a metaphorical sense, a colonial domination.“<sup>8</sup> Here, non-Western European colonial countries, like *[Bosnia-Herzegovina] and Chile*, have no historical alternative but to try to approximate the given attributes of this specific modern form of political community even when the very process of approximation means their continued subjection under a world order which only sets their tasks for them and over which they have no control.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, Durham 2011, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Anibal Quijano, *Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America*, in: *Nepantla: Views from South* 1 (2000), pp. 533–580.

<sup>5</sup>Madina Tlostanova, *The Postcolonial Condition, the Decolonial Option and the Post-socialist intervention*, in: Monika Albrecht (ed.), *Postcolonialism Cross-examined: Multidirectional Perspectives on Imperial and Colonial Pasts and the Newcolonial Present*, New York 2019, p. 166.

<sup>6</sup>Quijano, *Coloniality of Power*.

<sup>7</sup>Nelson Maldonado-Torres, *On the Coloniality of Being: Contributions to the Development of a Concept*, in: *Cultural Studies* 21 (2007), pp. 240–270.

<sup>8</sup>Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?*, Tokyo 1985, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup>Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought*, p. 10.

Keeping in mind that the process mentioned above has impacted on Bosnia-Herzegovina and Chile in different ways, I argue that the Bosnian case shares important characteristics with the more obvious examples of colonial geographies. While the territory of Chile was colonized in the 16th century by the arriving Spaniard conquistadores and ‘liberated’ in the early 19th century, the contemporary space of Bosnia-Herzegovina remained under the occupation of the Ottoman Sultanate and Austro-Hungarian Empire from the 15th until the early 20th century. In fact, even in the aftermath of the Austrian departure, Bosnia remained subjugated under South-Slavic kingdoms until the end of the WWII when it finally had its specific subjectivity both *de jure* and *de facto* recognized within the context of socialist Yugoslavia.

Moreover, considering historical developments through the lenses of coloniality (not colonialism), we can understand that the process of national liberation from the Spanish Empire in the 19th century hardly brought real freedom to the subjugated peoples of Chilean lands. Under the control of the dominant classes, the new Chilean state implement the project of „internal colonialism“<sup>10</sup>, where, under the policies of *blanqueamiento* (Spanish ‘whitening’), it repressed the indigenous population and expelled its traits from the national imaginary. At the same time, the state encouraged European immigration in order to make a ‘whiter’ nation.<sup>11</sup> In this sense, Chile can be positioned within the general condition of Latin America, where the construction of modern nation-states implied a process that was strictly directed against the reality of the social world that remained dominated with Indian and/or Mestizo majorities. As such, it presented a scenario of an impossible nation-state, a social space where it historically remained impossible to construct a fully nationalized society or a genuine nation state.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, Quijano’s idea that „the coloniality of power estab-

<sup>10</sup>Pablo Gonzales Casanova, *Exploracao, colonialism e luta pela democracia na America Latina*, Rio de Janeiro 2002.

<sup>11</sup>Jorge Larraín, *Identidad Chilena*, Santiago 2001.

<sup>12</sup>Quijano, *Coloniality of Power*, pp. 567–568.

lished o the idea of race should be accepted as a basic factor in the national question and the nation-state"<sup>13</sup> is similarly applicable to the Bosnian case. In a similar fashion to that of Chile, historically embedded cultural heterogeneity has made Bosnia into an unlikely nation-state, a member of the club that remains overdetermined by the occidental ideal of homogeneity and racial superiority most obvious in the predominance of ethnocentrism at the very foundation of the national idea. Thus, indigenous and lower-class mestizos remained only peripherally included in the national project dominated by the ideal of white superiority in Chile, while in Bosnia, the racialization of ethnicity/religion disabled people who share a common language, history and descent to construct a unified political community.

Therefore, while such reality is usually well accepted in the case of Chile and openly ignored in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian example, I claim that the historical progression of internal colonialism, implying the application of foreign models to local conditions, persistently resulted in the failure of the modernist dream in both of these societies. In this sense, coloniality, understood as a knowledge structuring mechanism, profoundly impacted on each of these social formations in distinct yet comparable ways. The coloniality of power is visible in both cases because in each of them, it was the imposition of the idea of race, particularly through its intimate relationship with class, ethnicity and religion, that emerged as an instrument of domination and acted as a limiting factor for constructing a nation-state based on Eurocentric model.

In this sense, both Bosnia-Herzegovina and Chile are constructed around the colonial axis of hierarchization and unable to embrace its proper sociocultural and sociohistorical specificities, and, therefore, remain in a situation of colonial condition.<sup>14</sup> This specific reality of a modernist quagmire inside of which both of these social formations have found themselves throughout the long modernist epoch is well

depicted by the notion of failed labor in the work of Chilean novelist and poet Roberto Bolaño.<sup>15</sup> In other words, neither Bosnia nor Chile were able to construct themselves as a genuine nation-state while attempting to reproduce a western model of a sociopolitical organization. The historical process reconfigured racial into class hierarchies in Chile and produced social inequalities that disable real democratization of both society and the state. However, in Bosnia, it was the historic inability of society to replicate the modular western nation-state that resulted in the depiction of a country that is simultaneously seen as a failed state and not a nation-state at all.

#### **Pedagogic state: educating consent in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Chile**

Educational theorist Michael W. Apple notes that „the national curriculum may be modified by the conflicts that its content generates, but it is in its very establishment that its politics lies.“<sup>16</sup> With this in mind, I consider that, rather than being one and universal, education and its specific national narration are „always entangled with projects of regulation, assimilation, transformation, and conservation.“<sup>17</sup> Thus, education, while promoting a specific form of nation-state knowledge and subjectivity, holds power over national cartography due to its ability to write a specific national space and its story. In this sense, the Gramscian „educator state“<sup>18</sup> is central for the perpetuation of specific power/knowledge relationships as it remains endowed with a superior capacity to imprint epistemic violence upon the wider population.

With this in mind, I argue that segregated educational systems are integral for the perpetuation of coloniality within the contemporary states of Bosnia and Chile. The type of colonial domination elaborated in the earlier parts of the article, understood as coloniality of

<sup>15</sup>Roberto Bolaño, *Amuleto*, Barcelona 1999.

<sup>16</sup>Michael Apple, *Cultural Politics and Education*, New York 1996, p. 35.

<sup>17</sup>Madina Tlostanova / Walter Mignolo, *Learning to Unlearn: Decolonial Reflections from Eurasia and the Americas*, Columbus 2012, p. 22.

<sup>18</sup>Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, in: Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (eds.), London 1971.

<sup>13</sup>Quijano, *Coloniality of Power*, pp.

<sup>14</sup>Tlostanova, *The Postcolonial Condition*.

power, remains deeply embedded within the educational models of each society. Thus, the Bosnia-Herzegovina educational system, replicating the wider organization of the social world, remains, just like the ethno-national state that gave it birth, segregated along the lines of ethnicity. In a similar way, Chilean contemporary education represents a bedrock of the historically embedded racial order of the Chilean nation-state and an expression of the more recent military intervention that prevented a change in such order.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, Bosnian ethno-national and Chilean racial-neoliberal states and their education which were once positioned within the colonial condition and explored through their entanglements within the occidental nation-state form come to communicate in interesting ways. The observation that both pedagogic projects educate social segregation as normatively accepted reveals the subtle pedagogic aspect of the coloniality of power. The Bosnian educational system divides children according to ethnicity and separates young Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs from each other, while the Chilean one also divides pupils into three categories, attributing, in general lines, to each race/class its type of school: private-paid (white/high or upper middle class), private-subsidized (mestizo/middle class) and public (mestizo, indigenous/lower class).

With this in mind, the story of Bosnian races, being an intriguing case, requires special attention. Even though racialization of ethnicity and religion in Bosnia is something I was somewhat aware of throughout my life, it was openly exemplified to me as such for the first time in 2014 through the case of Josip, a student of Croat ethnicity studying in the divided high school in the city of Mostar. Josip used the category of race (and not that of ethnicity or religion) to emphasize the differences between the Croat and Bosniak population in the city when speaking on the educational TV show about school and social segregation in our town. While explaining why he never visited the famous Old Bridge

(located in the Bosniak/Muslim part of the city), Josip stated how he was afraid to cross sides because people on the Bosniak/Muslim part would be able to recognize that he is Croat by simply looking at his skin color. Josip's belief that Mostar Croats/Catholics are whiter than their Bosniak/Muslim counterparts reflects how the coloniality of power remains embedded within the racial character of the nation-state. Conversely, the perceived racial difference is important because it is sufficient to explain the inability of constructing a common political community on the territory of not only Bosnia-Herzegovina but Chile as well.

Thinking about various Bosniak friends who for one reason or another appear 'whiter' than Josip, I wanted to check if this racialized perception of Bosnian ethnicities is widespread. Therefore, I asked class participants during the 2020 online high school summer course I taught in Bosnia-Herzegovina whether they thought racial differences between Bosniaks and Croats indeed existed. To my surprise, almost all of these students, regardless of their ethnicity, responded in the same way as Josip did. Only one Bosniak student, with a skin tone and hair color that somewhat approximated a northern European ideal, probably looking at herself in the ZOOM camera image, stood quietly in bewilderment and, after rolling her eyes for a while, finally asked: „And what about me?“ While these classroom 'incidents' generally demonstrate the prevalence of the racial character of the Bosnian ethnic order, the last scene in which a presence of a Bosniak student with the lightest skin tone in class is openly ignored confirms the ideological character of racism, one that remains strictly related to the modernist nation-state project.

Having these experiences in mind, I suggest reconsidering Bosnian ethnicities through a colonial lens and asking how Bosnian ethno-religious groups come to be rather racialized social categories. I argue that, Bosnia-Herzegovina, positioned within the frame of European regimes of whiteness, imports the racist logic from the west which it superimposes onto its existing religious frame. While Bosnian Chris-

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<sup>19</sup>In 1973, the coordinated action between the Chilean elites, the Chilean army, and the United States finished the experiment of the Chilean path to socialism led by the government of Salvador Allende Gossens.

tianity (Croat/Serb) easily qualifies as more white than Bosnian Islam (Bosniak), Bosnian Catholicism (Croat) takes primacy with respect to Bosnian Orthodox Christianity (Serb). In this sense, the Bosnian educational system, reflecting wider principles of the sociopolitical organization of the ethno-national state, indeed represents an example of nesting orientalism<sup>20</sup> since it constantly produces racism without races<sup>21</sup> by reproducing the legacy and predetermined form of European modernity within the local context of epigonal Europe.<sup>22</sup>

### **Decolonial pedagogy of dissent**

According to Mignolo, „decolonial thinking and doing focus on the enunciation, engaging in epistemic disobedience and delinking from the colonial matrix in order to open up decolonial options – a vision of life and society that requires decolonial subjects, decolonial knowledges and decolonial institutions.“<sup>23</sup> In this paper, remaining sensitive towards „the geopolitics and body-politics of knowledge growing out of the local histories, subjectivities and experiences“ of Southeastern Europe and South America, I shift the attention and „revisit how the local histories of different geopolitical spaces“ function „within the colonial matrix of power.“<sup>24</sup> I follow Dussel's philosophy of liberation<sup>25</sup> and consider the location of the speakers, in this case of protesting students, of Luka and Domingo, as the new locus of enunciation from which to reconsider the nation-state and its narration. Student experiences of the nation-state serve here as a point of departure for the knowledge production that can simultaneously embrace

<sup>20</sup>Milica Bakic-Hayden, *Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia*, in: *Slavic Review* 54 (1995), pp. 917–931.

<sup>21</sup>Etienne Balibar, *La Construction du Racisme*, in: *Actuel Marx* 2 (2005), pp. 11–28.

<sup>22</sup>Manuela Boatcă, *The Quasi-Europes: World Regions in Light of the Imperial Difference*, in: Thomas Reifer (ed.), *Global Crises and the Challenges of the 21st Century: Antisystemic Movements and the Transformation of the World-System*, Boulder 2012, ch. 10.

<sup>23</sup>Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side*, p. 10.

<sup>24</sup>Tlostanova / Mignolo, *Learning to Unlearn*, p. 6.

<sup>25</sup>Enrique Dussel, *Beyond Eurocentrism: The World-system and the Limits of Modernity*, in: Fredric Jameson / Masao Miyoshi (eds.), *The Cultures of Globalization*, Durham 1998.

the constitutive „underside of modernity and use it to construct the possibility of other worlds.“<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, understanding the educational project as central for the enforcement of power/knowledge relationships that weave permissible forms of nation-state being and subjectivity, I posit student protests as a practice of decoloniality projected upon the coloniality of the modern nation-state. Here, student voices, advancing a cultural, epistemic and subjective difference, articulate a subaltern critique of the hegemonic nation-state model, a critique that extends an invitation towards alternative ways of knowing the political community. Conversely, oppositional student politics turns into a practice of epistemic delinking from the ethno-national and racist-neoliberal states in Bosnia and Chile, respectively.

The following two student manifestos demonstrate the way in which protesting students are positioned vis-à-vis the hegemonic nation-state and its central narrative. „Ethnically segregated education will only deepen social divisions, and will cause the nationalism in Jajce to rise, a fact that will only benefit nationalistic parties. We, the students of Jajce, demand a complete cancelation of the system known as ‘two schools under one roof’ and advocate the implementation of a unified curriculum. Finally, we require support from all citizens of Jajce and Bosnia and Herzegovina to join our struggle against those who live in the past and do not let us build the future that we desire.“<sup>27</sup>

„Education has turned into an illusion of a different and better life, and today it is nothing more but frustration, an unfulfilled promise of something better, a mechanism that materially and ideologically reproduces injustice and domination. [...] We do not only mobilize for ourselves, but for a country as a whole, for the majorities, for a project of a more democratic, participative, and just society. [...] We

<sup>26</sup>Marcelle Maese-Cohen, *Introduction: Toward Planetary Decolonial Feminism*, in: *Qui Parle* 18 (2010), pp. 3–27.

<sup>27</sup>Jajce Student Council, *Mladi jajački srednjoškolci traže podršku javnosti*, March 21, 2017, <https://www.tacno.net/rijec-mladih/jajacki-srednjoskolci-traze-podrsku-javnosti-ne-dopustimo-etnicku-podjelu-skole/> (accessed November 10, 2017).

are the tip of the iceberg, of a continent that no longer tolerates being abused, stupefied, beaten, humiliated and exploited. [...] We are inheritors of past battles; we are memory and historic accumulation. [...] Our mobilizations have uncovered an unjust, unequal and unfair country.”<sup>28</sup>

Bearing the aforementioned in mind, I claim that the voices of protesting students have the power to produce an interrupted address and offer supplementary writing that can antagonize the structures of the modern/colonial state by revealing the difference between the enunciation (the context of utterance) and the address (the context of listening).<sup>29</sup> In other words, the official statement of the nation-state, emitted from political institutions and embedded in educational systems, is suspended by the time it reaches Srednja Strukovna Škola Jajce and Liceo de Aplicación. Once contrasted with the student experience of the social world and its order, official narration is interrupted on the periphery of the nation-state precisely because its explanatory power in this territory is effectively diminished.

Thus, these particular histories of student antagonism towards the state and its education, while incompatible with the story found in official textbooks, portray ambivalence existing within the idea of the nation-state, an idea whose indeterminated character reflects the conflictual relationships existing between those who write (books approved by the ministry of education) and those who live its narration (the subaltern students). In line with this, Aida, a 17-years-old student from Srednja Strukovna Škola Jajce, while talking about the proposed idea that her classmates of Croat ethnicity should study their own history, notes that: „History, since we inhabit the same territory, is shared by us all. Since history is science, it cannot be national, and even when it is called national, then this refers to the history of a

certain state. Since we live in the same state, if history is a science, then it cannot be different for children who belong to Croat and for children that belong to Bosniak people. If this history is different, then this means that it is not a science but a servant of a particular regime.”

The unease towards official history, which is seen as an imposition, was similarly expressed to me by Domingo when I asked for his view about Chile: „Sometimes I think Chile is a sad story of massacre and exploitation. I think we are a country that has not had the opportunity to progress in accordance with its interests. I believe we have been denied this quite a bit. I feel that Chile is a very, very violent construct, that it is one construct that has never allowed all its cultural expressions to develop peacefully within it. Sometimes I think Chile is a country built by force, by violence that comes to the surface every time something happens that is not to their liking. Therefore, there is no goal in Chile to build our country together. Instead, there has always been an attempt to overcome one point of view, one sense of things, one vision of our history. I think we are historically witnessing the consolidation of a country that is not ours, a country that does not fit our way of being, our culture.”

Therefore, bearing in mind the location from which the high school protests and its narrative emerges, I argue that student resistance towards instituted knowledge, such as the one witnessed in the student practice of mourning, reveals the colonial wound<sup>30</sup> of nation-state making in Bosnia and Chile. A careful reading of the student histories and their antagonism reveals anxieties withheld within the dominant narration of the nation-state in both societies.<sup>31</sup> The unhomely position of unincorporated subjects reveals the uncertainties of home and belonging to ethno-national and racial-neoliberal states in Bosnia and Chile, respectively. Thus, when we hear Luka contesting the fact that he is officially not allowed to be Bosnian because this is not a constitutional category, we realize that it is not the truth proclaimed by the

<sup>28</sup> Asamblea Coordinadora de Estudiantes Secundarios (ACES). Propuesta para la educación que queremos, December 1, 2019, [http://www.opech.cl/comunicaciones/2011/12/propuesta\\_aces\\_definitiva.pdf](http://www.opech.cl/comunicaciones/2011/12/propuesta_aces_definitiva.pdf) (accessed May 8, 2020).

<sup>29</sup> Homi Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*, London 1990.

[31] Walter Dignolo, *The Darker Side*.

<sup>30</sup> Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*.

<sup>31</sup> Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton 2000.

state but the knowledge which emerges from everyday experiences that subaltern students have of such a state, and that have for their difference been silenced, made inexistent and irrelevant, that become the only ones capable of „provincializing Europe“ and „returning the gaze“<sup>32</sup> to the hegemonic occidental nation-state from the localized standpoints.

In conclusion, both student social movements, propagating the inclusion of demands emerging ‘from below,’ allow us to reconsider the position of historically ‘subalternized’ political actors, located on the margins of the colonial nation-state projects – i.e. far away from Dom Naroda or La Moneda (the seats of power in Sarajevo and Santiago, respectively) – within the process of national narration. It is here, at the point of their interface, where the tension between the pedagogic and the ethnographic life of the nation-states is revealed. Echoing the problem of knowledge that haunts the symbolic formation of social authority and which is located around the aura of the nation-state, the antagonistic student performances disarticulate the colonial sum of knowledge precisely because they reveal the shreds and patches overwritten by the process of coloniality and its occidental nation-state form. In this sense, the inability of colonial pedagogy to domesticate protesting students demonstrates how the established nation-state, haunted by the spectrum of class, race, ethnicity, class antagonism or trans-ethnic solidarity, remains far from being an undisputed project. Thus, students from Srednja Strukovna Škola Jajce and Liceo de Aplicación create an environment by opening up the spaces for misrepresentation and misappropriations of the official narration, inside of which students can finally begin „learning to unlearn“ [35] or, as Domingo puts it, „dream with society where people do not compete over who has a better last name.“

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Notes:

[1] Sharad Chari / Katherine Verdery, *Thinking between the Posts: Postcolonialism, Postsocialism, and Ethnography after the Cold War*, in: *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51 (2009), pp. 6–34.

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<sup>32</sup>Tlostanova / Mignolo, *Learning to Unlearn*.